

Important Tips to Follow When Investing Your Money

1. Know your broker or investment firm.

- Before investing your money, check to see if the person asking you to invest (the “promoter”) is registered to sell securities in Indiana.
- Avoid doing business with promoters who have a history of state or federal disciplinary actions.
- Find out how a promoter earns money when you invest -- is it by commission or a flat fee?

2. Know your investments.

- Understand the costs and degree of risk associated with making an investment *before you invest*.
- Find out about the performance history of the investment. If a promoter is unwilling to give this information to you in writing, avoid making the investment.
- Before meeting with a promoter, map out your short-term and long-term investment goals. This is important so you will be better able to determine whether a particular investment is suitable for your investment needs.
- Ask the promoter questions. Investors have the right to ask the promoter for alternatives to a particular investment, for the risks associated with investments, and for the method in which the promoter will be paid for getting you to invest.

3. Look out for suspicious activities.

- Be suspicious of unsolicited or unwanted phone calls using high-pressure and persistent practices. If a promoter tries to get you to invest by using words like “once in a lifetime opportunity,” avoid investing your money with that promoter.
- Be suspicious of unsolicited e-mail investment offers.
- Do not invest money with someone who guarantees the safety of an investment or the amount of return from an investment. *Remember that there are no guarantees when investing your money.*
- If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is.

4. If you discover a problem, act quickly.

- It is your responsibility as an investor to check your account statements for any mistakes or any transactions you did not authorize.
- Take detailed notes while you are discussing an investment with a promoter. This way, you can know exactly what you discussed and avoid confusion.
- If the notes from your discussion with the promoter contradict what your account statement says, act quickly. Notify your promoter’s firm first. If this does not resolve the problem, notify the Indiana Secretary of State’s office.

CHECKLIST FOR THE WISE INVESTOR

- ☐ Did I call the Indiana Secretary of State's office at **1-800-223-8791** to check the licensing and registration of both the promoter and the securities offer (the investment)?
- ☐ Do I understand the costs associated with this investment?
- ☐ Do I understand the risks involved with this investment?
- ☐ Did I assess my short-term and long-term investment goals?
- ☐ Did I ask the promoter the following questions?
 1. What are the alternatives to this investment?
 2. What sort of risk is involved with this investment?
 3. How will you (the promoter) be paid for my investment?
- ☐ Are there any of the following suspicious activities that should raise red flags?
 1. High-pressure and persistent sales tactics
 2. "Once in a lifetime opportunity"
 3. A "guarantee" on the investment
- ☐ After investing, am I staying up-to-date with my investment by doing the following?
 1. Am I regularly checking my account statements for mistakes or unauthorized transactions?
 2. If I have found a mistake, have I notified the promoter's firm immediately?
 3. If the promoter and/or firm fail to resolve the problem, have I notified the Indiana Secretary of State's office?
- ☐ If I have suspected fraud or feel that I have been a victim of a scam, have I contacted the Indiana Secretary of State's office?